REASONS *for Recovering the Navigation upon the River* DEE *to the City of* CHESTER *and for Agreeing with the* Committee *in the Amendments made to the Bill for that Purpose.*

IN the Memory of Man Ships and Veſſels of conſiderable Burthen came uſually up under the Walls of the City of *Cheſter*; but are now forced to ſtay and Unload Eight Miles below, to the great Hindrance of Trade, Loſs to the Merchants, and Ruin of the ſaid City.

The Occaſion how this Navigation comes to be thus obſtructed, is this: The Channel of the ſaid River, by certain Works made on the North-ſide thereof, did cut into, and waſte the Soil and Ground on the South-ſide, where no Fences were made (nor could be by the Citizens, being not their Soil) and which is all a low, flat Ground: So that the River now runs for ſome way cloſe to the ſide of *Flintſhire*; but then takes a Courſe croſs the Sands for a Mile and half, or more; and not having any Bounds there, it makes no Depth of Channel, but is a meer Flaſh of Water till it comes again to the *Engliſh*-ſide at *Blacon* Lordſhip, which is high Land, and belongs to Madam *Offley*, and there it makes a good Depth of Channel; but there is no good Anchorage, nor any Accommodation; ſo the Ships are forc'd to ſtay below *Burton-Head*.

Thus ſtands the Caſe of the Citizens of *Cheſter*, who are deſirous to recover this Navigation at their own Expence, by laying a Duty of 1*d*. *per* Barrel upon Coals, and 2*d*. upon Lime, which is but 12*d*. *per* Tun unloaded in the City.

Object. But the Bill obliges the Bringers of the Coals and Lime to pay, and therefore the Citizens do not pay the Duty.

Anſw. 'Tis true, the Bringers are charged with the Duty, but not till the Coals and Lime are actually laid down and unloaded in the City; and they are never laid down and unloaded in the City, till the Citizens have actually bought them: So they muſt buy them charged with the Duty; and therefore 'tis plain, that though the Bringers are charged with the Duty, yet it is the Citizens only who do pay it.

Object. But why muſt Coals by Land be charged with a Duty for making a River Navigable? Is it reaſonable to charge any thing upon Land to encourage a Navigation?

Anſw. If nothing is to be charged upon Land for making a Navigation, then 'tis plain that that Navigation, according to this Objection, muſt never be made; becauſe there's nothing can come by Water which will bear the Charge.

But it is humbly preſumed, That thoſe who make this Objection, have forgotten what was done ſome time ſince in the Caſe of *Wye* and *Lugg*: Were not all the Lands in the County of *Hereford* charged for ſeveral Years in a great Sum of Money for making that River Navigable? And though the making it ſo has been for the Publick Advantage, yet did not ſome pay to that Charge, whoſe Private Intereſt it was to have been without that Navigation? But this is not the Caſe now in Diſpute; for no body pays here but the Citizens themſelves, as hath been before demonſtrated; and they are deſirous to pay the ſame, it being their Intereſt ſo to do.

Object. But it is Objected, That this Duty upon Coals will leſſen the Conſumption of them; and that will hurt the Colliers.

Anſw. The Reply to this is very obvious; for as the ſaid River now is, the Coals from *Malpas*, *Flint*, and *Baguilt*, cannot be brought to the City by Water but at high Spring-Tides, and that with Danger and Difficulty; ſo that the Citizens are often forced to have their Coals by Land-

QUEEN'S COLLEGE LIBRARY LONDON

Land-Carriage from *Afton* and *Hardin* Coal-Pits; and then thoſe Pits take the Advantage of the Citizens Neceſſities, and advance what Price they pleaſe upon their Coals. And thoſe who now Object againſt this Duty on Coals, becauſe it will (as they ſay) leſſen the Conſumption, did alſo make the ſame Objection, and with as little Reaſon, the laſt Year, as their own Fact will make appear: For though they did then ſo Object and Complain, that this Duty would leſſen the Conſumption; yet theſe very Perſons did themſelves the laſt Summer, raiſe their Coals 12 *d. per* Buſhel, which is 8 *d. per* Tun, upon the Citizens at *Afton* and *Hardin*; and the Citizens were forced to pay it, by reaſon the Seaſon and Difficulty of Water-Carriage was ſuch, they could not get their Coals by Water from other Coal-Pits. If the River were made Navigable, the Citizens would have their Coals cheaper by Water, when the Duty of 12 *d. per* Tun is upon them, than they can now; and therefore this Duty is ſo far from hindring the Conſumption of Coals in the City, that it will, by making the River Navigable, make the Coals come cheaper, and ſo increaſe the Conſumption. 'Tis true indeed, the Colliers at *Hardin* and *Afton* cannot then ſet the Dice, and make ſuch Exactions upon the Citizens as they now do; but ſure that will be ſo far from being an Argument againſt the Bill, that 'tis humbly hoped it will be accepted as the beſt Argument for it.

In ſhort the Citizens themſelves deſire to pay this Duty for Recovering and Preſerving this Navigation, and the Amount thereof cannot be much more than 350 or 400 *l. per Ann.* The Citizens do not cut through any Land but Madam *Offley's* Marſh, with whom they have Agreed, and who is willing to allow the Citizens a Part of the Sands belonging to her, as they are willing to allow to every Body a ſaving of all Right of Fiſheries.

REASONS

for Recovering and Preſerving the Navigation upon the River Dee to the City of Chester.

GUILDHALL LIBRARY